

The Australian National University

**National Institute of the Arts
School of Art**

Bachelor of Arts (Visual) Honours

Nicola Dickson

STUDIO REPORT

PRESENTED IN FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE
Bachelor of Arts (Visual) Honours

2003



0051138-09724-0



The Nature of Weeds

Evolving perceptions of the weed as a model of Nature

Abstract

This Honours Studio Project explores how painting may represent the concept of the weed and its relation to cultural perceptions of Nature. It examines this subject with reference to the aesthetic concept of the sublime in conjunction with the influence of aspects of contemporary visual culture. The work of Sally Smart, Fiona Hall and Simryn Gill was influential upon the studio research, which involved investigation of the incorporation of domestic decorative imagery with various painting processes to suggest the sublime. The final body of work consists of a series of four acrylic and oil paintings and several cut-outs constructed from commonplace imagery.

Acknowledgments

I am indebted to Robert Boynes and Deborah Singleton for their generous, consistent support and critical analysis of my work.

I am also grateful for the unique experiences and insights that participation in the Field Studies Program gave me. I would like to thank John Reid and particularly Mandy Martin for this opportunity.

My thanks also to Vivienne Binns for her time and the challenges she provided.

Table of Contents

Title page	1
Abstract	3
Acknowledgements	4
Table of Contents	5
Introduction	6
The concept of the weed	8
The collection of source material	10
Investigation of the use of painting to evoke the sublime: Semester One	11
Investigation of the use of painting to evoke the sublime: Semester Two	16
Exploration of the use of alternative materials to express the concept of the weed	19
Conclusion	24
Addenda	
List of Illustrations	31
Artist's Statement	33
Work Proposal	35
Curriculum Vitae	38
Bibliography	39

Introduction

“‘tis an unweeded garden
That grows to seed. Things rank and gross in nature
Possess it merely.”
Hamlet, Act I, sc.ii, 135

‘For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities– his eternal power and divine nature– have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.’
Romans: chapter 1,v 20. NIV version

A lone plant was growing through a crack in an urban footpath. My interest was captured by its luscious purple flower, delicately formed and encased within a prickly rosette of leaves. This plant’s resilience and persistence to survive emphasized its opportunistic nature; a nature that allowed it to thrive within the upheaval associated with human habitation. My aesthetic appreciation of its form and wonder at its survival were balanced with the knowledge of its origin and toxicity. This exotic invader was the cause of significant morbidity and mortality in livestock. Despite its beauty it is a dangerous plant, an unwanted plant, a noxious weed, worthy of its name Paterson’s Curse.

These reflections upon the dichotomies present in a single plant triggered my investigations at the beginning of third year into the concept of the weed. I have endeavored throughout my third and Honours years to develop a visual language that would not merely describe the form of selected plants but rather represent the nature of these plants that ensured their categorization as weeds. The development in my work through this period reflects an evolution in both my methodology and perceptions of the concept of the weed and its relationship to the natural world.

This Honours Studio Report outlines a chronological contextualized account of the various investigations I have conducted in the attempt to convey my evolving perceptions of the weed and its relation to Nature. Semester One involved the collection of source material and an exploration of the way painting may express the sublime. This exploration was informed by research into the aesthetic concept of the sublime as understood and expressed in the 18th and

19th centuries. Semester Two continued these investigations, examining contemporary theories of the sublime and focusing research on how patterning might convey the notion of limitlessness. In addition the manipulation of alternative forms of imagery that reflect common cultural perceptions of Nature was explored. This imagery, incorporated within the patterning of domestic textiles, wall posters and wallpapers, was combined with the form of the weed in order to question not only notions of the weed but also those of Nature.

The concept of the Weed

The existence and categorization of plants as weeds is a result of human physical and perceptual interaction with the natural world. Consideration of the environmental impact of weeds on a national or global scale reveals a very different significance compared to the perception of weeds as merely nuisance plants in an enclosed suburban garden. A globalization of world ecology is occurring as people, their plants and animals increasingly travel and resettle. Within Australia, weeds rank as the second most significant cause of bio-diversity loss¹. The specific weeds present are a reflection of our historical and contemporary cultural and commercial links. European settlers, uncomfortable in the unfamiliar landscape, established gardens that acted as repositories for memories of their homeland. Some introduced plants thrived in Australian climatic and soil conditions, escaping the confines of the garden to invade the environment and overwhelm native species. The movement of plant species based on the desire to create our own version of paradise in our backyards has been responsible for the creation of some of the most serious environmental weeds in Australia.² Responsible gardening is usually defined today as selecting plants that require the least use of water or pesticides to sustain them. Such plants are the most likely 'escapees' and potential weeds.

The initial position I adopted in third year was that weeds, such as Paterson's Curse were not only unwanted, but also those things 'rank and gross in nature.' My earliest paintings attempted to portray the plant in a manner that alluded to the possession of an uncomfortable, sinister nature despite a beautiful form. As Figures 1 and 2 show, the means I used to convey this were an exaggeration of form both of the plant and its shadow. These works were essentially portraits.



Figure 1

¹ Dr Trudi Mullet, *Plant Invaders*, Public Lecture CSIRO, (Canberra: 2002).

² Tim Low, *Feral Future* (Ringwood: Penguin Books, 1999), 72.

Figure 2



George Seddon points out that the common definition of a weed as a plant out of place, or a plant that grows where it is not wanted, outlines a point of view that is 'openly, unabashedly anthropocentric.'³ The perception of a plant as desirable, and thus wanted, is labile and hence its categorization as a weed may change. My initial perception of weeds as fundamentally evil was flawed and simplistic. This anthropocentric position was very far removed from my aim

to understand and address what were the inherent qualities of weeds that allowed them to dominate specific ecosystems and hence exist as weeds. I rejected notions that a weed is merely a plant out of place, or that weeds are 'bad' plants in favor of investigating a position based upon the relationship of the weed and the environment both natural and cultural.

The specific biological characteristics of a plant that enable it to assume status as a weed are both inherent and relational. These characteristics may be exhibited by both native and exotic species when upon introduction into a specific ecosystem, the weed will display a greater ability to establish, grow and spread than pre-existing species. Nature's response to humankind's shifting of species from sites of origin has been the creation of vast monocultures where preexisting diverse plant populations and their associated invertebrate and vertebrate animal and bird life are eliminated. As with the demise of unique cultural practices, a consequence of our global society is that natural ecosystems are irredeemably merged, mutated and lost. In comparison to original location or current desirability, the identification and categorization of plants as weeds due their actual or potential ability to overwhelm a specific ecosystem is a more meaningful basis to consider these plants.

My personal response to such weed invasions is a mixture of fear, awe and lament at the irredeemable loss of species due to Nature responding to human intervention in such an uncontrollable manner. This subjective response could be described as a response to the sublime. I consider that perception of the sublime in the natural world is achieved when a loss

³ George Seddon, *Landprints: Reflections on Place and Landscape*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 17.

of complacency allows the recognition of uncertainty. Realization of the impossibility of containing and controlling natural forces enables the appreciation of humankind's vulnerability and is the key to the development of a respectful position that attempts to understand and work with these forces. The identification of my emotional response as that of response to the sublime was an entry point in my search to visually describe the nature of the weed in a manner that may engage with a meaningful ecological debate.

The collection of source material

I consider that the most pertinent definition of a weed is a plant, which due to its biological superiority in a specific location generates negative social, environmental or economic consequences. On the basis of my emotive response to overwhelming weed invasions I located this definition within the context of the aesthetic concept of the sublime. Whilst my work in third year was based primarily on a single subject to investigate the concept of the weed, I endeavored to base my Honours work on a small selection of noxious weeds. Plants are declared noxious by State government when deemed to be of such environmental or pastoral significance that they must be eradicated by landowners if found. The plant species that I recorded include Sweet Briar, Thorny Apple, Blackberry, Morning Glory and Mexican Poppy. As with many other weeds the presence of some of these exotic species in Australia is due to the fact that these plants were deemed useful in a past context, either as decorative garden plants as in the case of Sweet Briar and Morning Glory or as fruit as for Blackberry. Mexican Poppy and Thorny Apple were both accidental introductions. Their success as weeds is due to the ability of these particular plants to dominate specific ecosystems supplanting preexisting plant species. Thorny Apple and Mexican Poppy are toxic plants that invade and contaminate cereal crops, Blackberry and Sweet Briar lay waste large areas of pastoral land with thorny thickets while Morning Glory ensnares and chokes rainforest. Despite the magnitude of the negative impact of these plants, all are exquisitely beautiful and challenge the subliminal association made between the beautiful and the good.



Figure 3

My initial priority for the development of this work was to collect sufficient source material within the limited time available. Early Semester One this year was spent observing, recording and photographing the distinct physical changes of these plants as they completed their life cycle. Pencil drawings with colour details in watercolor or pencil are my preferred mode of recording. This method provided an accurate record and allowed experimentation with form and composition. Figures 3 and 4 are examples of some of the plant studies undertaken. The drawings constructed during this period provided the basis for the development of full-scale cartoons in preparation for paintings to be made later in the year. Factual scientific information concerning the plant's origins, distribution and properties was also collated.⁴



Figure 4

The opportunity to participate in the Field Studies program that explored the Lachlan River Catchment area allowed the observation of serious pastoral and environmental weeds not usually found within the Canberra region, such as Mexican Poppy and Thorny Apple. In addition, discussion with local experts involved with revegetation and weed control programs was made available to provide insight into the significance of these plants.

Investigation of the use of painting to evoke the sublime: Semester One

Concurrently with the collection of source material, I attempted to develop a painting process that would evoke the sublime based not only on composition, scale and tone but also via the physical properties of the medium itself. These investigations were informed by research into how visual artists, influenced by various philosophical theories, have historically and currently suggested the sublime. Modern colloquial use of the term sublime, conveys an implication of superiority, however this is a vestigial remnant of the original meaning of the term and its associations of feeling of reverence and awe.⁵ According to Kant, perception of the sublime is

⁴ W. T. and Cuthbertson Parsons, E.G., *Noxious Weeds of Australia* (Melbourne: Inkata Press, 1992).

⁵ Andrew Wilton, *Turner and the Sublime* (London: British Museum Publications, 1980), 9.

subjective, thus locating the sublime within the imagination rather than being an inherent property of an object itself. Therefore, cultural perceptions of the nature of the sublime vary in time.⁶ Mellor describes the variation of the sublime experience articulated by writers and theorists of the Romantic period concerning the form and initiating factors of the sublime. However it is fundamentally that state when 'the fully conscious poetic mind grasps a nature that is entirely unmediated by words.'⁷ The subjective nature of the sublime arguably allows it to be associated with contemporary environmental issues.

The perception of Nature as the revelation of God's divine creativity and omnipotence ensured that the immensity and majesty of natural forces became the vehicle to evoke the sublime in the viewer's imagination within the Romantic period of the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Thus the aesthetic concept of the sublime became a means for people to relate to the natural world.⁸ The influential philosophical theories of Edmund Burke concerning the nature of the sublime and its opposition to the experience of beauty resonated with my personal perception of the sublime. These theories provided an aesthetic context in which to place the weed, allowing it to be considered as something other than beautiful despite its form. Burke suggests that the experience of terror is fundamental to the perception of the sublime: *"Whatever is fitted in any sort to excite ideas of pain and danger, that is to say, whatever is in any sort terrible, or is conversant about terrible objects, or operates in a manner analogous to terror, is a source of the sublime."*⁹ In Burke's view the primary source of terror is confrontation with the vast, obscure and immense. These features cause terror not just because of relative scale, but because such states go beyond the boundaries of our powers of perception and cognition, extending into a limitless, formless state where their full nature cannot be entirely known. The practical inconceivability or indistinctness of the subject is implicit in the experience of the sublime. The unknown becomes the terrifying and is contrasted with the comfort provided by the beautiful and its discrete, bounded form.¹⁰

Although the discrete work of art cannot be sublime in itself it may 'express sublimity in some indirect way by referring to the (limited) experience of sublimity.'¹¹ Within the Romantic period the perception of limitlessness was often visually represented by the obscurity that occurred by dissolving a focal area into either darkness or blinding light¹². This was the initial device that I explored throughout much of Semester One in order to refer to the sublime. Initial research

⁶ Thomas McEvelley, "Turned Upside Down and inside Out," in *Sticky Sublime*, ed. Bill Beckley (New York: Allworth Press, 2001), 74.

⁷ Anne K. Mellor, *Romanticism and Gender* (New York: Routledge, 1993), 85.

⁸ Peter Timms, *Making Nature. Six Walks in the Bush* (Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin, 2001), 22.

⁹ Jean Clay, *Romanticism* (Oxford: Phaidon, 1981), 150.

¹⁰ McEvelley, "Turned Upside Down and inside Out," 62.

¹¹ Ruth Lorand, *Aesthetic Order. A Philosophy of Order, Beauty and Art* (London: Routledge, 2000), 33.

¹² Matthew Brennan, *Wordsworth, Turner and Romantic Landscape. A Study of the Traditions of the Picturesque and the Sublime* (Carolina: Camden House, 1987), 78.

into this method was directed towards examination of the work of J.M.W. Turner. Turner considered light a metaphor for the divine and used high key colour to obscure the focal areas of many of his works. These areas of indistinctness were vital to allow the viewer's imagination to experience the sublime.¹³ Contemporary influences include Louise Hearman and Bill Henson. As Figure 5 shows, Hearman's use of strong tonal contrasts and the suggestion of formlessness by blurring and merger of the figure into the ground allowed an element of uncertainty and mood of unease to exist in her work. Likewise the ambiguity created by the tonal composition and loss of detail in Bill Henson's photographic images allow reference to the sublime as illustrated in Figure 6. These visual devices that are evocative of the mental uncertainty of the sublime were also incorporated in my work at this time.



Figure 5



Figure 6

Within Semester One I attempted to refer to the sublime by manipulation of the tonal composition of the work. These works consisted of a focal area of intense light while most of the figure of the weed was merged into a dark ground (Figures 7, 8 and 9). The indistinct boundaries of the figure-ground relationship provided a reference to the formless, limitless sublime. The dark ground was formed from a multitude of acrylic layers based on earth pigments with sedimentary properties in order to refer to the earth from which the weeds grow. The area reserved for the representation of light was preserved with water whilst diluted acrylic

¹³ Matthew Brennan, *Wordsworth, Turner and the Romantic Landscape. A Study of the Traditions of the Picturesque and the Sublime*, 21.

paint was applied to the remainder of the surface. This layer was encouraged to spread and merge with subsequent layers, the movement of the medium offering an analogy to the spread of the weed. The wide tonal contrasts created allowed the establishment of a mood of unease within the work. The figure of the weed was over-painted in oil paint, the form of the plant being represented in a manner that aimed for a balance between verisimilitude and indistinctness, allowing recognition of the specific plant whilst evoking the uncertainty of the sublime.

Within this period I also experimented with suggestion of limitlessness by manipulation of scale and framing of the image. These works of large-scale flowers incorporated patterning applied via a stencil. Experimentation with the organization of these works into diptychs in order to refer to the various ways weeds are perceived was also attempted. These works I believe did not address my objectives of representing the nature of the weed via engagement with the concept of sublimity as clearly as those works in which the tonal composition expressed the notions of limitlessness and formlessness. Encouragement to explore additional modes of representing the weed that were not as purely descriptive of form, coupled with my dissatisfaction of the lack of reference to current attitudes concerning the natural world, led me to investigate further means of engagement with my objectives.



Figure 7



Figure 8



Figure 9

Investigation of the use of painting to evoke the sublime: Semester Two

The possibility of referring to the limitlessness of the sublime in an alternative manner other than framing, scale and tonal variation in the figure-ground relationship was explored at the end of Semester One. My aim was to develop a painting process that not only evoked the sublime but also related the concept of the weed to common perceptions of Nature. These investigations were influenced by the consideration that patterning is an analogy to limitlessness, a precondition to the uncertainty that allows the imagination to experience the sublime. The limitless is characterized by a lack of defined borders and therefore center and margins. Without limits, individual elements have no clear location or role and thus all are equally significant.¹⁴ As a visual device patterns are able to convey both this notion of limitlessness as well as exist as a form of order. In addition the individual units ordered within patterns provide historical and cultural insights into the society that created such patterns.¹⁵ The nature of patterns is such that the significance and content of the single isolated motif differs from the integrated whole. Likewise, the perception and effect of the single, isolated weed is vastly different to that of the overwhelming invasion. The widespread incorporation of botanical imagery throughout history and currently into patterns reflects our aesthetic appreciation of these natural forms as well as a desire to understand and order such subjects. The frequency of our exposure to such imagery aids in the formation of our perceptions of the Natural world.

The development of this working process, which incorporates reference to society's visual culture located in areas other than the Fine Arts, was influenced by the work of artists such as Vivienne Binns. Binns incorporates wide reference to the way in which our culture is reflected and influenced by various decorative visual objects and images that surround us. Such objects acting as a means of forming individual and cultural identity. Likewise in my work the patterning I incorporate is a reflection of cultural desire to appreciate and develop a relational understanding of the Natural world.

I initiated investigation into modes of relating the figure of the noxious weed with imagery derived from domestic textiles that incorporated botanical imagery. The works aimed to oppose the sublime nature of the weed with the cultural perception of Nature as a system of highly predictable order that patterning implies. Experimentation with spatial, color and tonal

¹⁴ Lorand, *Aesthetic Order. A Philosophy of Order, Beauty and Art*, 33.

¹⁵ Paula Wynell Bradley, "Miriam Schapiro: The Feminist Transformation of an Avant-Garde Artist" (PhD, North Carolina, 1983), 116.

relationships between the figure and the ground were conducted in order to achieve this aim. I also explored to what degree the pattern needed to maintain its integrity in order to refer to the sublime. Commercially available curtain material was used as a stencil for the application of acrylic spray paint to create the pattern imagery. The chosen stencils were based upon a similar or identical plant to the particular weed that was the subject of that work.

Within these investigations I attempted to represent the plant depicted as a weed, emphasising its biological superiority and beauty. Thus I endeavoured to give the impression of the weed's ability to overwhelm and dominate, whilst exploring its connection to the notion that Nature exists as an orderly integrated whole. Figures 10 and 11 are the most successful examples of these investigations. Both of these works employed similar processes of colour and surface manipulation to convey the character of the weed. The power to invade and spread was conveyed predominantly by the colour relationship between the figure and ground. The colour used for the figure was representative of the most distinctive feature of the plant chosen (ie. flower or fruit colour) and was applied in multiple layers of translucent acrylic paint on a gessoed canvas surface. This method enabled the achievement of a fluctuating, luminous, highly saturated coloured surface which appeared to be irregularly pitted due to the inclusion of a layer based on a pigment with sedimentary qualities. The subtle surface and colour irregularities aided in the creation of a mood of tension. The simultaneous colour contrast employed in the work titled *Invasion*, emphasised the domination of the weed to an even greater extent, whilst fragmentation of the patterned ground and dissolution of the figure of the weed suggested the uncertainty of the sublime.



Figure 10

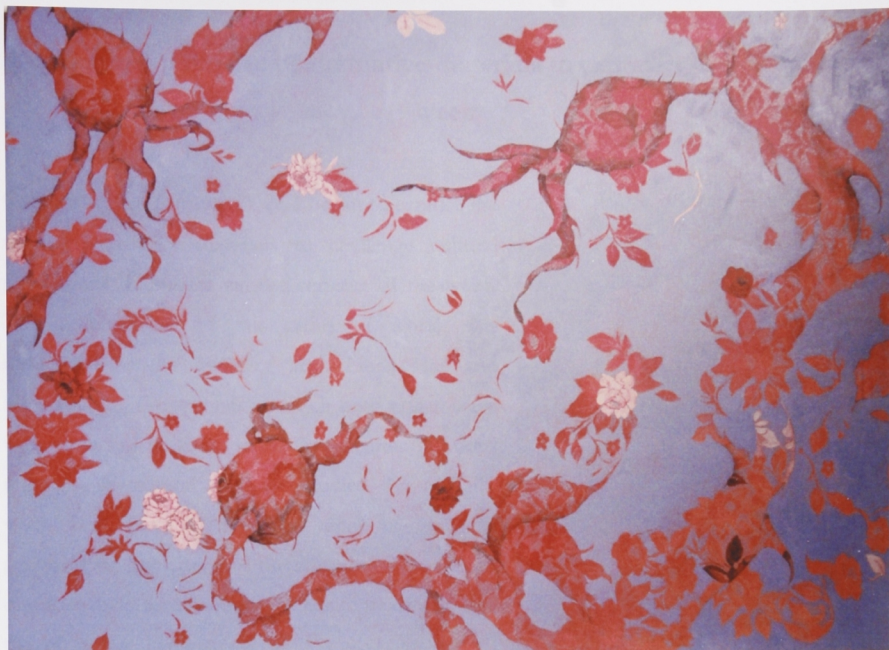


Figure 11

In order to immerse the viewer in the anarchy of the weed, the decision was made to increase the size of the works four times their current size to 1.8 x 2.2m. These large format works, completed in the last half of Semester Two consolidated and investigated further the processes outlined for *Invasion*. Within these large format works I aimed to convey the notions of biological superiority, sublimity and a blurring between the notions of Nature and Culture. In this way I continued to explore various means of expressing the concept of the weed, concentrating on colour, form and figure-ground relationship. The development of some of these works was influenced by the ornamental form of the grotesque, with the incorporation of an axis of symmetry to form monstrous weeds. As in the Medieval and Renaissance periods where the terrifying and the monstrous was used to reinforce the concept of the limitation of human knowledge and power over the natural world¹⁶, I aimed to encourage reflection in the contemporary viewer of human fallibility in the attempt to dominate Nature.

¹⁶ Simon Watney, *Fantastic Painters* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1977), 14.

Exploration of the use of alternative materials to express the concept of the weed

Concurrently in Semester Two I began to explore the use of alternative materials to challenge cultural perceptions of Nature via the concept of the weed. The development of this series of works was influenced by the work of both Fiona Hall and Simryn Gill. The manner in which both artists use a wide variety of materials to challenge cultural notions regarding the natural world was studied. Fiona Hall's work *Leaf Litter* 2000-03, a series of gouache paintings on banknotes of the country of the plant's origin enabled ready allusion to her topic of concern, the economic exploitation of botanical resources¹⁷. Her use of materials tended to emphasize meaning rather than challenge preconceptions, (Figure 12).



Figure 12



Figure 13

In contrast Gill's photographic works, *Forest* 1996-1998, *Rampant* 1999, and *A small town at the turn of the century* 1999-2000 humorously explore the nature/culture dichotomy by reordering and animating materials in order to allow the viewer to consciously challenge subconscious associations that materials and images hold. In reference to *Rampant* (Figure 13) Gill states that exotic plants are “*despised for their commonness, their success, their over-familiarity, and being where we feel they should not be. They disrupt*

¹⁷ Deborah Hart, "Fiona Hall Leaf Litter," *Artonview* winter, no. 34 (2003), 24.

the order we would like to impose and remind us of our fallibility when attempting to play god and create our own earthly Edens.”¹⁸ Gill’s particularly anthropomorphic position and the implication of the similarities between culturally displaced people and ‘displaced’ plants, is similar to my position. I consider that the current locations of weeds can not be considered as displacement. Instead it is a normal and logical consequence due to the biological characteristics of these plants and the current ecosystem they are in.

The concept of the displacement of plants arises from presuppositions about a ‘proper location’ of plants. This is related both to the assumption that plants may be categorised purely by location and to our conception of how Nature operates. Contemporary perceptions of Nature vary widely, but generally assume that Nature is pleasant, emotionally restorative and benign¹⁹. The formation of such perceptions is not only based upon our exposure to the order of patterned botanical imagery but other popular forms of imagery as well. Images of an idealized, romantic Nature are conveyed within the genre of Nature photography as seen in calendars, posters and film. Within these images color is often heightened and softening and blurring of the landscape components occurs. Humans are conspicuously absent, as is any evidence of natural history²⁰. This form of imagery could be categorized as kitsch with its manipulation of common ideals of what is beautiful in the Natural world. The prevalence and impact of such imagery evidences a cultural desire to be in a relationship with an idealized natural world. In order to question the benign concept of Nature I began a series of works at the beginning of the second Semester that incorporated the form of noxious weed with commercially available images of Nature. These works aimed to provoke the consideration that the existence and actions of weeds provides a more accurate analogy of how the Natural world operates.



Figure 14

¹⁸ Wayne Tunnicliffe, "Self Selection," in *Simryn Gill. Selected Work*, ed. Curated by Wayne Tunnicliffe (Sydney: Art Gallery of New South Wales, 2002), 9.

¹⁹ Timms, *Making Nature. Six Walks in the Bush*, 196.

²⁰ Rebecca Solnit, *As Eve Said to the Serpent. On Landscape, Gender and Art* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 2001), 201.



Figure 15

I began to experiment with the construction of collages of the weed's form from photographic and photocopied images of idealised Nature (Figures 14 and 15). These however gave an impression of containment of the weed. Using embossed wallpaper, I constructed another series of work that featured the escape and spread of the weed from the containment of the domestic garden (Figure 16).

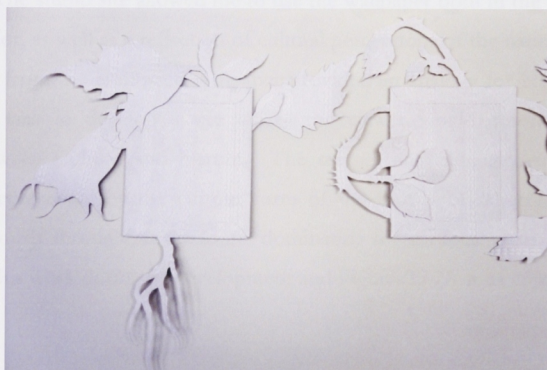


Figure 16

The development of this work into a larger wall installation was influenced by the work of Sally Smart. Smart's dismantling and reconstruction of inorganic and bodily forms, as shown in Figure 17, challenges established divisions between concepts regarding the interior and exterior, body, psyche, nature and culture²¹. Likewise I aimed to question the segregation of the concepts of Nature and Culture. As Michael Pollan states, this is an arbitrary division

constructed by humankind under the premise that we stand outside or apart from Nature, rather than a part of it²².



Figure 17

Difficulties associated with the limited time for installation of such a work and its visualisation in the gallery space were overcome with the decision to construct this work within my studio space in I Block, and record the work photographically. The studio space in its state of disrepair provided a ready reference to a site where a cultural artefact was under the influence of natural forces. The studio site allowed me to use the wallpaper both in the decorative function it was intended for, as well as a reflection of cultural perceptions of the natural world. The form of the weed cut from the embossed wallpaper provided an analogy for Nature. My aim with this installation was to develop a site where the viewer would consider the intertwined relationship between Culture and Nature. The merger and entanglement of this arbitrary division being represented by the cut-out form of the thorny blackberry vine that emerged subtly and insidiously throughout the room, dominating several focal areas. Figures 18 and 19 show details of this work during its development and Figures 25-28 at its completion.

²¹ Lara Travis, "Sally Smart" in *Re-Emplace*, ed. Binghui Huangfu (Singapore: Earl Lu Gallery, 1999), 10.

²² Michael Pollan, *The Botany of Desire: A Plant's-Eye View of the World* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2001), pxxiv.



Figure 18



Figure 19

Conclusion

Nature and Culture are inextricably mixed in the weed. The existence and recognition of the weed could be considered as cultural construct, however the social, economic and environmental impact of weed invasions is due to natural forces evocative of the sublime. Weed invaders are the undesirable and logical consequence of Nature responding to humankind's actions, and as such, weed invasions could be considered to be a true revelation of how Nature operates. Our inability to prevent or rectify these unleashed consequences exemplifies the interdependent relationship of Culture and Nature.

Art allows us to explore the relationship of humans to the ineffable that exists in Nature. Recognition of the uncomfortable uncertainty of the sublime allows the realisation of the vulnerability and fragility of not only the individual self, but also human society and its Culture. I have engaged with the concept of sublimity as it not only relates to what I consider a meaningful way to consider serious weed invaders, but it is also a method of consideration that may remove the inherent complacency and environmental apathy that is within our society.

The objective for my work this year was to develop a visual language to express the nature and concept of the weed and its relation to cultural perceptions of Nature. The formation of a meaningful concept of the weed and placing of this concept in the context of the sublime was the starting point of my research. Evaluation of the effectiveness in fulfilling my objectives could be based on the success of my work in portraying the attributes of the weed in a manner that evoked a sublime response on part of the viewer, whilst challenging preconceived notions of how Nature operates.

The primary attributes forming the dichotomous nature of the weed that I attempted to represent were those of beauty of the individual weed combined with the terrifying ability to invade and dominate of the weed invasion. The means I employed to evoke the sublime in my work evolved during the year. The initial processes I employed were based on the processes used by visual artists of the Romantic era, in particularly J.W. M. Turner as well the contemporary artists Louise Hearman and Bill Henson. These processes based on dissolution of the figure-ground relationship via tonal composition were both evocative of the sublime and an atmosphere of unease. However the works of Semester One based on this methodology lacked a degree of engagement with current cultural notions of the natural world.

Influenced by the aesthetic theories of Ruth Lorand, and artists such as Vivienne Binns who refer broadly to visual culture, greater contemporary relevance was achieved by the works of Semester Two. Within these paintings the figure of the weed was related to other forms of botanical decorative imagery that reflect and form our conception of the natural world. The incorporation of patterning allowed reference to the sublime as well as challenging presuppositions regarding Nature. These paintings (Figures 20-24) completed in the last half of Semester Two, were the most successful works in fulfilling my objectives.

Exploration of the use of additional materials, namely wallpapers and posters, was also conducted to challenge cultural perceptions of Nature. This exploration, influenced by the work of Fiona Hall, Simryn Gill and Sally Smart, was based on the notion that the action of the weed provides a true model of Nature's character. I consider that although these works were unable to engage as successfully with the concept of the sublime, they were possibly the more lucid works in challenging the notion of a distinction between Nature and Culture.

This Honours Research Project, although largely complete in itself, does not indicate the end of my interest in my subject, philosophical musings or working methodology. On the contrary, I feel that I am in a position now to refine the developments of this year. No doubt, these refinements will lead to further explorations. Participation in an Honours Research Project has given me a greater insight into the process of conceptual and visual research. Both the development of an ability to critically examine my own and other artist's work and the adoption of a position where research is an end in itself, rather than a means to an end, has been fundamental this year.

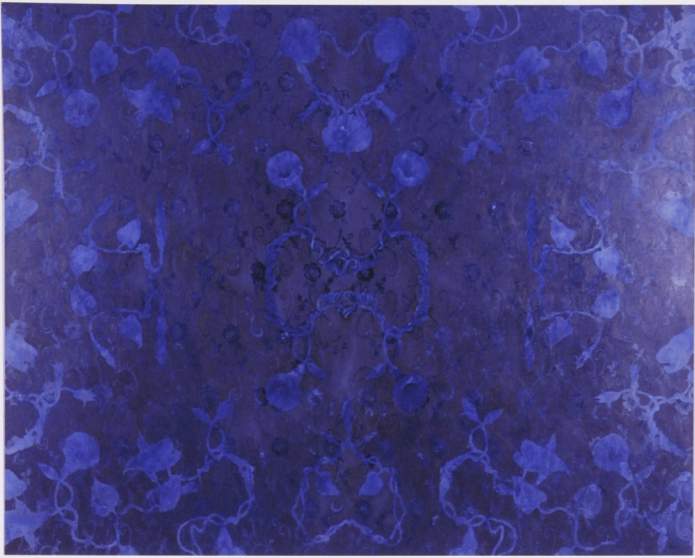


Figure 20: Conquest: Morning glory

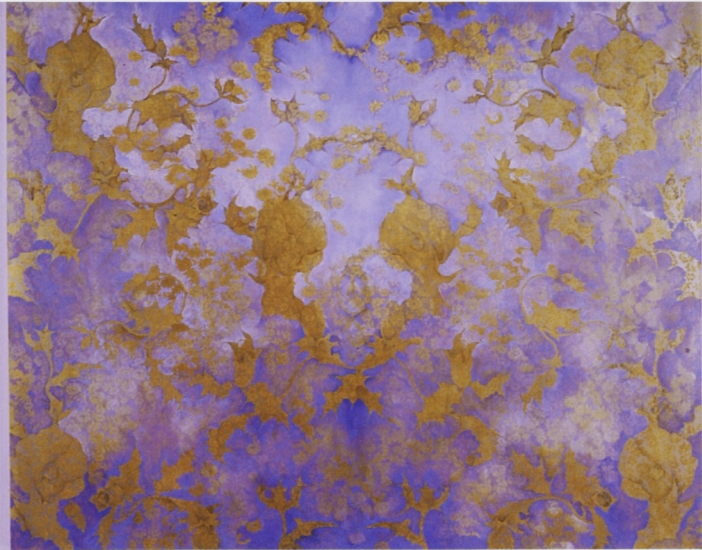


Figure 21: Conquest: Mexican Poppy

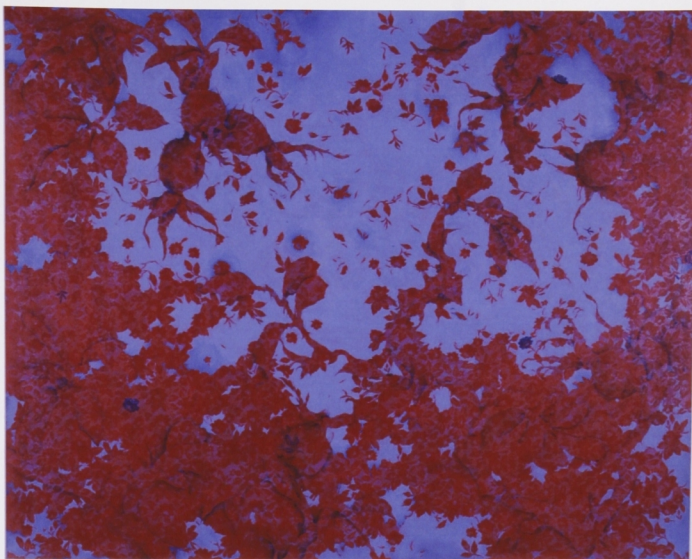


Figure 22: Conquest: Sweet Briar I



Figure 23: Conquest: Sweet Briar II



Figure 24: Conquest: Thorny Apple



Figure 25: Merger, Installation View



Figure 26: Merger, detail



Figure 27: Merger, detail



Figure 28: Merger, detail

List of Illustrations

- Figure 1: *Paterson's Curse I*, 2002, 57 x 57cm oil/canvas
- Figure 2: *Paterson's Curse II*: 2002, 57 x 57cm, oil/canvas
- Figure 3: Drawing of Sweet Briar, 25 x 30cm, pencil/paper
- Figure 4: Drawing of Sweet Briar, 25 x 25cm, pencil/paper
- Figure 5: Louise Hearman, *Untitled 423*, oil on Masonite, 1995, 92 x 69cm²³
- Figure 6: Bill Henson, *Paris Opera project*, Type C colour photograph, 1990-91, 125.0 x 125.0 cm²⁴
- Figure 7: *Sweet Briar*, 90 x 75cm, acrylic and oil/canvas
- Figure 8: *Bathurst Burr*, 90 x 75cm, acrylic and oil/ canvas
- Figure 9: *Sweet Briar II*, 120 x 90cm, acrylic and oil/canvas
- Figure 10: *Morning Glory: Invasion*, 120 x 90cm, acrylic and oil/canvas
- Figure 11: *Sweet Briar: Invasion*: 120 x 90 cm, acrylic and oil/canvas
- Figure 12: Fiona Hall, *Leaf Litter: Caryota urens fish tail palm*, gouache on banknotes, 2000-2002, dimensions variable²⁵
- Figure 13: Simryn Gill, *Rampart*, gelatin silver photograph, 1999, 28 x 26 cm²⁶
- Figure 14: Blackberry Collage, 76 x 47 cm, poster and wrapping paper
- Figure 15: Thorny Apple Collage, 80 x 54 cm, poster and photocopy
- Figure 16: *Garden Escapees*, (detail), embossed wallpaper, dimensions variable
- Figure 17: Sally Smart *Family Tree House (detail)*, synthetic polymer paint on felt, canvas and fabric with collage elements, studio installation view, 1999, dimensions variable, Melbourne²⁷
- Figure 18: *Merger*, work in progress, room installation (detail), embossed wallpaper, dimensions variable
- Figure 19: *Merger*, work in progress, room installation (detail), embossed wallpaper, dimensions variable
- Figure 20: *Conquest: Morning Glory*, 178 x 218 cm, acrylic and oil/canvas
- Figure 21: *Conquest: Mexican Poppy*, 178 x 218 cm, acrylic and oil/canvas
- Figure 22: *Conquest: Sweet Briar I*, 178 x 218 cm, acrylic and oil/canvas
- Figure 23: *Conquest: Sweet Briar II*, 178 x 218 cm, acrylic and oil/canvas
- Figure 24: *Conquest: Thorny Apple*, 178 x 218 cm, acrylic and oil/canvas

²³ Laura Murray Cree and Neville Drury, ed., *Australian Painting Now* (Sydney: Craftsman House, 2000), 143.

²⁴ Allan Watson, ed., *Sublime: 25 Years of the Wesfarmers Collection of Australian Art* (Canberra: National Library of Australia, 2002), 56.

²⁵ Hart, "Fiona Hall Leaf Litter," 25.

²⁶ Wayne Tunnicliffe, ed., *Simryn Gill Selected Work* (Sydney: Art Gallery of New South Wales, 2002), 47.

²⁷ Travis, "Sally Smart" in *Re-Emplace*, 15.

Figure 25: *Merger*: room installation, embossed wallpaper, dimensions variable

Figure 26: *Merger*: room installation (detail), embossed wallpaper, dimensions variable

Figure 27: *Merger*: room installation (detail), embossed wallpaper, dimensions variable

Figure 28: *Merger*: room installation (detail), embossed wallpaper, dimensions variable

represent the concept of the word and its relationship to common conceptions of Nature. The final body of work consists of a series of large framed drawings and of paintings and an installation constructed from wallpaper or canvas.

My understanding of the concept of the word has evolved over a period that coincides with plants as either nuisance plants, or those plants that are out of place, breeds a different bond with the plant's relationship to the current ecosystem is it in. I consider that the most meaningful definition of a word is, a plant that due to its inherent biological imperative is a given location, generates negative social, economic or environmental consequences. Overcoming word invasion are the undesirable and logical consequences of Nature responding to humankind's actions and provide a true model of how Nature functions. This model challenges the comfortable, commonly held cultural perceptions of Nature, which are reinforced by our visual culture that orders, idealizes and suppresses images derived from the natural world.

The apparent limited scale and dominating nature of word invasion is evident at its origins. Placement of the concept of the word within the context of the sublime provides both an artistic context for the work and a means of establishing of the environmental significance of the word.

The source of Ruth Lenzel and work of Vincent Van Gogh are among the inspirations of my work. Based on the notion that painting is both an analogy to the functioning of the sublime and a reflection of the culture's desire to understand, understand and order perceptions of the natural world. Lenzel's Love of the word is a painting, depicting human imagery. The use of depictions of a word as a subject for the exploration of every part of a surface, painted by multiple layers of translucent acrylic paint provides a ground for interpretation. The artist and word relationship between the figure of the word and the painted ground, was investigated in order to question the word's ability to communicate and how through a series of the sublime that is present in the ever-changing nature of the word.

Challenging the common perception that Nature and Culture exist as a dichotomy was explored in the final exhibition and painting series, *Merger*, based on the idea

Artist' Statement

The objective of my Honours Research Project has been to investigate how painting may express the concept of the weed and its relationship to common conceptions of Nature. The final body of work consists of a series of large format acrylic and oil paintings and an installation constructed from wallpaper cut-outs.

My understanding of the concept of the weed has evolved from a position that considered these plants as either nuisance plants, or those plants that are out of place, towards a definition based on the plant's relationship to the current ecosystem it is in. I consider that the most meaningful definition of a weed as, **a plant that due to its inherent biological superiority in a given location, generates negative social, economic or environmental consequences.** Overwhelming weed invasions are the undesirable and logical consequence of Nature responding to humankind's actions and provide a true model of how Nature functions. Such a model challenges the comfortable, commonly held cultural perceptions of Nature, which are reinforced by our visual culture that orders, idealizes and sanitizes imagery derived from the natural world.

The apparent limitless scale and dominating nature of weed invasions is evocative of the sublime. Placement of the concept of the weed within the aesthetic concept of the sublime provides both an artistic context for my work and a means of consideration of the environmental significance of the weed.

The writing of Ruth Lorand and work of Vivienne Binns influenced the development of my work. Based on the notion that patterning is both an analogy to the limitlessness of the sublime and a reflection of the cultural desire to appreciate, understand and order perceptions of the natural world, I related the form of the weed to patterning based on botanical imagery. The use of domestic textiles as a stencil for the application of spray paint onto a surface formed by multiple layers of translucent acrylic paint provided a ground for these works. The colour and tonal relationship between the figure of the weed and the patterned ground were manipulated in order to represent the weed's ability to overwhelm and dominate and thus convey a sense of the sublime that is present in the terrifying nature of the weed.

Challenging the common conception that Nature and Culture exist as a dichotomy was explored in the use of wallpapers and posters to construct imagery based on the form of the

weed. These investigations were influenced by the work of Fiona Hall, Simryn Gill and Sally Smart, and consisted of a series of cut-outs based on the premise that Culture is in fact indivisible from Nature. The intertwined relationship being evidenced in the site of the weed.

Nicola Dickson

Work Proposal March 2003

Aim

The work I have undertaken this year has been to develop a visual language that attempts to describe the nature and concept of the weed and its relationship to cultural conceptions of Nature.

Subject

My investigations in developing this imagery will be based on the clear representation of selected noxious weeds. Although a single toxic plant may be depicted as the subject of a work, it is the apparently infinite nature of weed invasions that is key to the theme of the work. In order to refer to the vast overwhelming nature of weed invasions I will explore the use of forms of representation that will engage with the artistic heritage of the nation. I will also experiment with the incorporation of additional forms of imagery that reflect cultural perceptions of Nature in order to question the location of the weed within such perceptions.

Historical/ Conceptual Basis

The cultural changes that have occurred in Australia since European settlement are associated with vast changes in the natural environment. This is evident from a simple list of Australian Flora. Although some plant introductions have been controlled, the majority have been deliberate. All exotic plants are not defined as weeds; those that are detrimental for food, fodder or decorative purposes are said to be useful introductions.

A weed is more frequently defined as a plant out of place. Such a definition is useful as it acknowledges the fact that weeds occur when plants are moved beyond their natural distribution. However such a definition does not engage with the question of the plant that occurs to be categorized as a weed.

Weed invasions themselves and the diminished life diversity that they cause are inevitable consequences of the insertion of Nature to culture, change. My personal response to this example of Nature beyond human control is that of a humbling awe mingled with love and

Nicola Dickson

Work Proposal March 2003

Aim

The work I have undertaken this year has been to develop a visual language that attempts to describe the nature and concept of the weed and its relationship to cultural conceptions of Nature.

Subject

My investigations in developing this imagery will be based on the clear representation of selected noxious weeds. Although a single finite plant may be depicted as the subject of my work, it is the apparently infinite nature of weed invasions that in fact is the thematic of the work. In order to refer to the vast, overwhelming nature of weed invasions I will explore the use of forms of representation that will engage with the aesthetic concept of the sublime. I will also experiment with the incorporation of additional forms of imagery that reflects cultural perceptions of Nature in order to question the location of the weed within such perceptions.

Historical/ Conceptual Basis

The cultural changes that have occurred in Australia since European Settlement are associated with vast changes in the natural environment. Exotic weeds now comprise 15% of Australian Flora. Although some plant introductions have been accidental, the majority has been deliberate. All exotic plants are not defined as weeds, those that are deemed useful for food, fodder or decorative purposes are said to be useful introductions.

A weed is most frequently defined as a 'plant out of place.' Such a definition is useful as it acknowledges the fact that weeds occur when plants are moved beyond their normal distribution. However such a definition does not engage with the essence of the plant that causes it to be categorized as a weed.

Weed invasions themselves and the diminished bio-diversity that they cause are inevitable consequences of the reaction of Nature to cultural change. My personal response to this example of Nature beyond human control is that of a humbling awe mingled with fear and

lament. Such a response is akin to that described in the philosophical theories concerning the sublime as expounded by Burke in 1757.

*‘Whatever is fitted in any sort to excite ideas of pain and danger, that is to say, whatever is in any sort terrible, or is conversant about terrible objects, or operates in a manner analogous to terror, is a source of the sublime’*²⁸

The replacement of vast areas of natural and pastoral environments with weed invaders is due to these plants superior biological capabilities. It is this overwhelming aspect of the weed that I wish to convey in a manner that may provoke a sublime response on part of the viewer thus commenting in a meaningful manner upon the environmental significance of these plants.

Both Burke’s and Kant’s theories of the aesthetic concept of the Sublime were extremely influential upon visual artists both during the Romantic period and during the 20th century. My research will involve investigation of these theories and the processes that various artists have incorporated to refer to the Sublime.

Working Process

Both locally available and weeds found whilst participating in the Field Studies Program will be recorded in field drawings and photographically at various stages of their life cycle. Form, composition and scale will be variably manipulated within the process of drawing in order to investigate how the weedy nature of the plant may be suggested. In the attempt to evoke a sublime response on part of the viewer, a variety of painting processes and compositional devices will be explored. These will include manipulation of scale and figure-ground relationship merging the figure into light, darkness or the ground itself in the attempt to produce a sense of the infinite.

Materials and Methods

- ◆ Traditional drawing and watercolour media will be used to record and investigate form.
- ◆ Experimentation with the use of additional forms of imagery, both incorporated within the painting process and separately as cut-outs or collage.
- ◆ Both acrylic and Oil mediums will be used in the painting process.

²⁸ Clay, *Romanticism*, 150.

Timeframe

Source material will be collected while available throughout Semester One. Concurrently I will explore painting processes that may evoke a sublime response. These investigations will continue throughout the year together with the exploration of the use of additional sources of imagery.

The Honours Studio Report will be produced throughout the year and be available for inspection.

Exhibition Details

Group Exhibition

2010, *Art in a Bushman's Outfit*

2011, *Landscape Gold and Water*, Crown Regional Gallery, Old State College, Orange

Artists' Gallery

Awards

2011, ANU H.C. Cooreby's Scholarship

Publications

Mandy Martin and Sarah Ryan, (Ed) *The Landscape Blueprint: Environment and Studio*, Textual Institute of the Arts, Australian National University, 2015

Martin, Mandy, (Ed) *Landscape, Gold and Water: Environment and Studio*, Textual Institute of the Arts, Australian National University, Canberra, 2012

Curriculum Vitae

2003, Bachelor of Visual Art, Honours Program. National Institute of the Arts, ANU (current).
1982, Bachelor of Veterinary Science, Sydney University.
1981, Bachelor of Science (Veterinary), Sydney University.

Exhibition Details

Group Exhibitions

2003, ‘Art at Roberta’s’, Grenfell
2003, Land\$cape Gold and Water, Cowra Regional Gallery, CSA foyer Gallery, Orange Regional Gallery.

Awards:

2003, ANU H C Coomb’s Scholarship.

Publications:

Mandy Martin and Sarah Ryan, (Ed) The Lachlan: Blue-Gold, Environment Studio, National Institute of the Arts, Australian National University, 2003.
Martin, Mandy, (Ed) Land\$cape, Gold and Water, Environment Studio, National Institute of the Arts, Australian National University, Canberra, 2002.

Bibliography

- Bradley Paula Wynell, "Miriam Schapiro: The Feminist Transformation of an Avant-Garde Artist," PhD, North Carolina, 1983.
- Brennan Matthew, *Wordsworth, Turner and Romantic Landscape: A Study of the Traditions of the Picturesque and the Sublime*, Carolina: Camden House, 1987.
- Clay Jean, *Romanticism*, Oxford: Phaidon, 1981.
- Drury Neville and Laura Murray Cree, ed. *Australian Painting Now*, Sydney: Craftsman House, 2000.
- Hart Deborah, "Fiona Hall Leaf Litter." *Artonview* winter, no. 34 (2003): 23-26.
- Lorand Ruth, *Aesthetic Order: A Philosophy of Order, Beauty and Art*, London: Routledge, 2000.
- Low Tim, *Feral Future*, Ringwood: Penguin Books, 1999.
- McDonald Helen, "Feminising the Surreal," *Art and Australia* 34, no. 2 (1996): 202-209.
- McEvelley Thomas, "Turned Upside Down and inside Out." in *Sticky Sublime*, ed. Bill Beckley. New York: Allworth Press, 2001.
- Mellor Anne K., *Romanticism and Gender*, New York: Routledge, 1993
- Mullet, Dr Trudi, *Plant Invaders*, Public Lecture CSIRO, Centre for Plant Biodiversity Research, Canberra, 2002.
- Parsons, W. T. and Cuthbertson, E.G., *Noxious Weeds of Australia*, Melbourne: Inkata Press, 1992.
- Pollan Michael, *The Botany of Desire: A Plant's-Eye View of the World*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2001.
- Seddon George, *Landprints: Reflections on Place and Landscape*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.
- Solnit Rebecca, *As Eve Said to the Serpent: On Landscape, Gender and Art*, Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 2001.
- Timms Peter, *Making Nature: Six Walks in the Bush*, Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin, 2001.
- Travis Lara, "Sally Smart" in *Re-Emplace*, ed. Binghui Huangfu, Singapore: Earl Lu Gallery, 1999.
- Tunncliffe Wayne, "Self Selection" in *Simryn Gill, Selected Work*, curated by Wayne Tunncliffe. Sydney: Art Gallery of New South Wales, 2002.

Watney Simon, *Fantastic Painters*, New York: St Martin's Press, 1977.

Watson Allan, ed. *Sublime: 25 Years of the Wesfarmers Collection of Australian Art*, Canberra: National Library of Australia, 2002.

Wilton Andrew, *Turner and the Sublime*, London: British Museum Publications, 1980.

My understanding of the concept of the word has evolved from a notion that associated these plants as either nuisance plants, or those plants that are out of place, through a definition based on the plant's relationship to the natural world to the idea that the word may denote the definition of a weed as a plant that due to its inherent biological capability in a given location, generates negative social, ecological or environmental consequences. Overriding weed invasions are the undeniable and logical consequences of Nature responding to mankind's actions and provide a new model of how Nature functions. Such a model challenges the comfortable, culturally held cultural perception of Nature, which is reinforced by our visual culture that defines, interprets and sanctions images derived from the natural world.

The apparent limited scope and domain of weed invasions is evidence of the sublime. The extent of the concept of the word within the ecological collapse of the sublime provides both an artistic context for my work and a means of consideration of the environmental significance of the word.

The writing of Rick Leckard and work of Vincent Caru influenced the development of my work. Based on the notion that weaving a loom is a reply to the wilderness of the natural and a reflection of the cultural desire to appropriate, domesticate and order wilderness of the natural world, Leckard the form of the weed to weaving based on botanical imagery. The use of domestic textiles as a material for the application of spray paint and a surface defined by multiple layers of translucent acrylic paint provided a ground for these works. The colour and visual relationship between figure of the weed and the patterned ground was manipulated in order to represent the weed's ability to overtake and dominate.

Challenging the common perception the Nature and Culture was a dichotomy was explored in the use of wallpaper and pattern to form imagery based on various of the natural world. These investigations were influenced by the work of Peter Hall, Simon Willmet and John Jones, and consisted of a series of murals based on the pattern that Nature is the inevitable force Nature. The murals and wallpaper being exhibited in the use of the word

Artist' Statement

The objective of my Honours Research Project has been to investigate how painting may express the concept of the weed and its relationship to common conceptions of Nature. The final body of work consists of a series of five acrylic and oil paintings and a series of cut-outs.

My understanding of the concept of the weed has evolved from a position that considered these plants as either nuisance plants, or those plants that are out of place, towards a definition based on the plant's relationship to the current ecosystem it is in. I consider that the most meaningful definition of a weed as, **a plant that due to its inherent biological superiority in a given location, generates negative social, economic or environmental consequences.** Overwhelming weed invasions are the undesirable and logical consequence of Nature responding to humankind's actions and provide a true model of how Nature functions. Such a model challenges the comfortable, commonly held cultural perceptions of Nature, which are reinforced by our visual culture that orders, idealizes and sanitizes imagery derived from the natural world.

The apparent limitless scale and dominating nature of weed invasions is evocative of the sublime. Placement of the concept of the weed within the aesthetic concept of the sublime provides both an artistic context for my work and a means of consideration of the environmental significance of the weed.

The writing of Ruth Lorand and work of Vivienne Binns influenced the development of my work. Based on the notion that patterning is both an analogy to the limitlessness of the sublime and a reflection of the cultural desire to appreciate, understand and order perceptions of the natural world, I related the form of the weed to patterning based on botanical imagery. The use of domestic textiles as a stencil for the application of spray paint onto a surface formed by multiple layers of translucent acrylic paint provided a ground for these works. The colour and tonal relationship between figure of the weed and the patterned ground were manipulated, in order to represent the weed's ability to overwhelm and dominate.

Challenging the common conception that Nature and Culture exist as a dichotomy was explored in the use of wallpapers and posters to form imagery based on cut-outs of the weed's form. These investigations were influenced by the work of Fiona Hall, Simryn Gill and Sally Smart, and consisted of a series of cut-outs based on the premise that Culture is in fact indivisible from Nature. The intertwined relationship being evidenced in the site of the weed.

Artist' Statement

The objective of my Honours Research Project has been to investigate how painting may express the concept of the weed and its relationship to common conceptions of Nature. The final body of work consists of a series of five acrylic and oil paintings and a series of cut-outs.

My understanding of the concept of the weed has evolved from a position that considered these plants as either nuisance plants, or those plants that are out of place, towards a definition based on the plant's relationship to the current ecosystem it is in. I consider that the most meaningful definition of a weed as, **a plant that due to its inherent biological superiority in a given location, generates negative social, economic or environmental consequences.** Overwhelming weed invasions are the undesirable and logical consequence of Nature responding to humankind's actions and provide a true model of how Nature functions. Such a model challenges the comfortable, commonly held cultural perceptions of Nature, which are reinforced by our visual culture that orders, idealizes and sanitizes imagery derived from the natural world.

The apparent limitless scale and dominating nature of weed invasions is evocative of the sublime. Placement of the concept of the weed within the aesthetic concept of the sublime provides both an artistic context for my work and a means of consideration of the environmental significance of the weed.

The writing of Ruth Lorand and work of Vivienne Binns influenced the development of my work. Based on the notion that patterning is both an analogy to the limitlessness of the sublime and a reflection of the cultural desire to appreciate, understand and order perceptions of the natural world, I related the form of the weed to patterning based on botanical imagery. The use of domestic textiles as a stencil for the application of spray paint onto a surface formed by multiple layers of translucent acrylic paint provided a ground for these works. The colour and tonal relationship between figure of the weed and the patterned ground were manipulated, in order to represent the weed's ability to overwhelm and dominate.

Challenging the common conception that Nature and Culture exist as a dichotomy was explored in the use of wallpapers and posters to form imagery based on cut-outs of the weed's form. These investigations were influenced by the work of Fiona Hall, Simryn Gill and Sally Smart, and consisted of a series of cut-outs based on the premise that Culture is in fact indivisible from Nature. The intertwined relationship being evidenced in the site of the weed.